226 [87] After the drive through the dammed-off area, there are usually several fish remaining that succeeded in slipping through the chain. The women then take baskets and bail the pool dry, throwing the water over the dam.

Very often the women dam up part of a marsh or stream and bail out the water with baskets without setting traps or waiting for the water level to go down.

In all three cases we find: 1) setting the trap in front of the drain channel; 2) the drive in the dammed-up area; and 3) bailing out this section. The catch is divided equally among the women who participated in the work. [88]

These three methods of fishing prevail among all the riparian peoples of the Congo, Kasai, Fimi, Lake Leopold II, and the lower Lukenie.

On the upper Lukenie, starting with the Oshwe sector, no traps are made. At most the women occasionally dam up a section of the rivers and streams of the interior and bail them out with baskets to catch the fish.

226 ●184 The Ipanga, Batitu, Bokala, and Yaelima do not fish at all. They are people of the forest and not of the water. Hunting is their chief occupation, and fishing is unknown to them.

In this connection, these tribes are wholly distinct from their neighbors to the west. It must be noted, however, that even among the latter all the clans do not engage in fishing. The groups of the interior do not fish any more than their brothers of the sector of Oshwe and Bumbuli. The traps and other contrivances which we shall discuss below are unknown to both groups. In this respect, all these peoples have a common characteristic, recalling their common origin. In the lower Lukenie and farther west, however, part of the population, the Bandzali, "people of the water," have adapted themselves to the new conditions of their environment. The river became for them a source of wealth and well-being, and a part of their social activity was oriented toward the exploitation of this precious resource.

226 258 At the present time fishing and the preparation of salt are practically the only means of subsistence and unquestionably the principal occupations of all the riparian groups in the region of Leopoldville, Kwamouth, Lake Leopold II, and the lower Lukenie.

304
184

The tattoos of Ipanga and Batitu women differ considerably from those of the men, except for the facial designs. The lines of small dots that we observed and described for the women among the western peoples are quite widespread throughout the region. On certain women these scars are not only found on the abdomen and upper thighs, but they decorate the whole body and sometimes even the arms.

In the region of the Oshwe sector, especially near the eastern limits of the territory occupied by the Batitu, we encountered, moreover, several women whose tattoos were notably different from those of their sisters to the west. The palm-leaf designs on the temples are replaced by a series of concentric circles around a small dot in strong relief. This dot is placed half-way between the eye and the ear. These women were probably not natives of the region. In our opinion, they had come in through trade or even through abduction. They probably belonged to the Bokala or Yaelima tribe, although we were unable

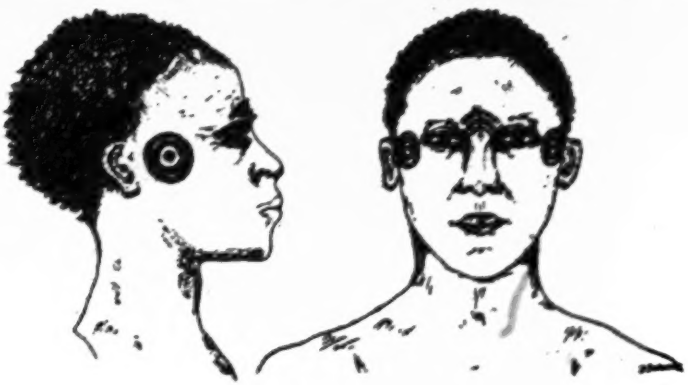


Fig. 119. Tattoos of the Lake Leopold II Tribes.

to get confirmation of this from the natives. Among these [195] latter tribes, tattooing is very much in fashion. The women in particular seem to be very fond of this type of ornamentation.

304 The designs are so many and varied that we could not attempt to provide a detailed description of them. We believe that we may divide them, on the whole, into three main classes or categories.

1) The racial or tribal tattoo.

101 classifies the Bakela (or Boyela), who are unquestionably pure Mongo, among the Wakutshu [Wakusu] or Batetela is highly significant.

161 It is impossible to give an exact figure for the size of the population we have just defined. In any case one can estimate that it is more than a million.

● 184 Throughout the huge territory occupied by this people, only insignificant differences in institutions or language can be observed. Greater divergences appear in the material manifestations of culture.

101 563 In my opinion it is likely that certain groups which belong among the Nkundo-Mongo as far as culture and speech are concerned, may be distinguished from them in genealogy and history. Among these are the true Elima or riverain people (the Boloki, the Eleku, the Elinga of the upper Lomela and the upper Tshuapa), (2) the Ngombe tribes

2. We exclude a few Libinja and Basoko clans living near Coquilhatville, since they are clearly of alien origin. The native name for the Tshuapa [River] is Jwafa or Jafa and, higher up, Lwafa. Among the Bongando and the Bahamba it is called the Laha.

of the Lomela, the Mbole, the Bakutu of the Lomela-Tshuapa (with whom one should probably include the Ntomba and the Nkole), (3)

3. See my article in Congo, 1931, Vol.1, pp. 21 ff.

and perhaps also the Mpama and the Losakanyi. (4). This likelihood

4. The latter are erroneously called Losakanja by Father Schebesta in Vollblutneger und Halbzwerge, p. 199. They seem to have lived formerly on the lower Momboyo River (Luilaka); the land on which Flandria Mission has been established still bears their name.

562 clothing and dressed her in valuable furs, especially in part of the
556 pelt of a striped antelope called mpangɛ. In some villages she was permitted to wear leopardskin in front as well as in back.

Then the father would decree (-bɛ́kya) that since his daughter
[582] had become bolɪ́mbɔ́ she would always wear furs and would stop working, and that she would be given in marriage only to a very rich and influential man, not to the first comer. Therefore, a synonym for bolɪ́mbɔ́ is bɔ̌na ɔ̂ɛ́ boɛ́ko, "child of the decree, a child set apart, forbidden."

This ceremony may be held regardless of the child's age, at any time between three years and adolescence.

When the ceremony is ended the girl withdraws (-ulama, transitive -uja) into a hut specially prepared for this occasion, which is called ileke. Her seclusion lasts only a few months. When certain natural needs oblige her to leave the house, she goes out the back way through the banana grove and hides as much of herself as possible under a mat. She does not walk on the bare ground; her feet must not
[285] touch the earth. That is why mats are spread everywhere she steps. She does no work; her food is prepared by her mother, sister, aunt, etc., or by a slave. When it comes to her toilette, she washes her hands not in water, but in palm oil. [32] All these practices are marks of respect and honor.

When the period of seclusion is ended, the girl's father gives a second feast, with dances, drinks, etc., and the bolɪ́mbɔ́ comes out walking on mats. But there is no further ceremony. From then on the girl is no different from other girls. But she retains the sign of her distinction, the wearing of furs, and she does no housework.

[582] The marriage of a bolɪ́mbɔ́ always occurred very late, since a
[558] man who wanted to take her for his wife had to collect a good deal of wealth before he could take the risk of asking for her hand. Should his attempt prove fruitless, he was exposed to ridicule in the whole region.

184 Among the tribes living on the left bank of the Lulaka any
556 man who was rich and of good family could ask for the hand of a
562 bolɪ́mbɔ́ in marriage. Among the Injɔ́lɔ́, on the other hand, the re-
582 quirements were more complicated. The suitor had to belong to another tribe or group. For instance, a girl who belonged to the

194 Engónjó group would be given only to a man from the West, the
556 Ngombe, or a neighboring tribe, but never to an Engónjó. All the
562 Engónjó considered the bolómbó their sister. Thus when the future hus-
582 band went to the family of the bolómbó to ask for her hand, every village barred his way by means of a fence. All the bride price valuables which he carried with him were taken from him, and an equivalent amount in various kinds of goods, such as hens, ducks, dogs, mats, etc., was substituted for it. That is, he exchanged bride price valuables for nkomi valuables [dowry]. (1) The suitor could pass only when the

1. See Chapter II, Article VII.

village that barred his way had nothing left with which to continue the exchange. If he found his riches exhausted, he had to go back home to replenish the supply. Everything he gave in this [his] fashion was counted as bride price, lónjí (1) and everything he received was part of the nkomi [dowry]. (2)

1. See Chapter II, Article VIII.

2. See Chapter II, Article VII.

556 It is understandable that under these conditions asking to
562 marry a bolómbó was a luxury that the common man could not afford.
582 The suitor had to belong to a rich and influential family all of whose members would assist him.

When the suitor finally succeeded in clearing a passage to the father of the chosen one with sufficient treasures, the latter put no further obstacles in his way. As for the girl, she felt exceedingly honored and delighted that a man loved her so much that he would go to so much trouble and spend such a vast amount out of affection for her.

As for the rest of the proceedings, the bride price payment was made in the same way as for any other marriage. But when the

1. Clothing. Nudity.

291 855 Until he has reached the age of discretion and even a little later, the Nkundó child wears nothing more around his loins than a belt of beads or a plain string usually adorned with some amulet. Nobody is shocked by this rudimentary attire. Parents take great interest in the adornment of their children; from a very early age [801] they are seen wearing belts of trading beads, bracelets, rings around the ankles made of iron, copper, or brass, and in addition, at the present time, glass beads above the knees.

291 As the child grows older the clothing increases. From the outset there are differences on the basis of sex.

The boy acquires a thin strip of cloth which is attached to his string or belt simply by folding back the two ends. The cloth falls between his legs without being tight, allowing for great freedom of movement and the circulation of air; this is an excellent precaution against perspiration due to extreme heat, but it is not very effective protection against indiscreet looks, at least in certain positions. The fabric made of raffia may be decorated to a greater or a lesser extent. In former times there existed different kinds, which we need not describe here. The length of the hanging borders is dictated by vanity. The string was often replaced by a raffia belt or -- among prominent men -- by a leather thong.

The woman's garment consists of a broad raffia belt whose two ends are gradually narrowed, ending in cords which are tied on the [53] stomach. In the center of this belt (nkfúf (1) a ball of raffia

1. Or bokangí, bokangí wá nkfúf. Among the Bombwanja it is called likóngó.

fibers is attached (bonkoko). A piece of cloth (efufa or lofufa) whose width may vary from 3 centimeters to 20 centimeters or more, depending on the age and the wearer's intensity of the feeling of modesty, is attached to the cords and falls more or less low on the body. For a [392] feast or display the efufa is replaced with a more valuable and longer [854] piece of cloth (lontíí or, among the Elíngí of Losanganya, ilíka).

291 The nkɔ́nɔ́ is unknown beyond the Jwalɔ and the Lulaka. In that re-
187 gion the women tie a string (or a belt of beads) around themselves and attach a second piece of cloth to it.

Thus the male garment is a rudimentary sort of shorts, open on
291 the sides, while female dress is much more open. In general the efufa is an appropriate protection of one's modesty, but it is inadequate in certain positions. (2)

(61)
196

2. It may be interesting to note that etɔ́ɔ́ nsamɔnyɔ́, or just plain etɔ́ɔ́, which is the term for a man's garment, also indicates the male line of descent, while the female line is often designated by the term nkɔ́nɔ́ (sometimes by the word jwɔ́mɔtɔ derived from bɔ́mɔtɔ, "woman"). Let us add that lonkundó jwɔ́ nkɔ́nɔ́ means "pure, flawless Lonkundo, not corrupted by foreign influences." This expression should be compared with the following phrases: langue maternel, moedertaal, "mother tongue," etc.

291 At present the nkɔ́nɔ́ is no longer worn except by a few elderly
177 inhabitants of villages far from the main communication lines. Everywhere else the ancient mode of dress has been replaced by materials imported from Europe. The women wear at least a sangatɔ́mbɔ, a kind of short skirt which falls from their loins at least to the middle of their thighs if not further. Middle-aged men in the interior have simply changed the material of their garment but not its form. The younger ones, on the contrary, have frankly adopted the European mode of dress.

291 A married woman is not allowed to enter the village of her rela-
581 tives by marriage (bakilɔ́) or appear before them [54] without supple-
(196) menting her usual attire with one or more bɛlɛlɛkɛ (banana leaves cut
191 into fringes). The term bakilɔ́ must be understood as it is meant by the Nkundó; it excludes those with whom the wife may sometimes perform the sexual act and who are called "husbands" broadly speaking.

arises but rarely. Furthermore, if a daughter is required to perform similar duties for her father, she will undertake this obligation only with the lament: njôy'ɛɛna ɛ̌kɨ̂ 'm wimɨ́kɨ́, "I have come to see where I had my origin." Any woman who has been in that position will later know no oath more sacred than this one: la botakɨ́ wɨ́ fafɨ́ bɔ̌kɨ̂ 'm wɛ̌nɨ́kɨ́ la mpaka, "by my father's nakedness which I saw when he was old."

Thus we can draw the conclusion that the Nkundɔ́ are offended by nakedness and as a rule do not tolerate it. The exceptions do not invalidate this generalization; on the contrary, they tend to support it.

2. Speech. Obscenities and propriety.

In general the Nkundɔ́ see nothing wrong with using obscene expressions. They only describe them as "bad" if they become indecent.

If a conversation touches on matters of sex, they may wonder whether a particular topic is necessary, interesting, or entertaining; they will not ask themselves whether it is moral. For it will be apparent throughout this study they have no concept of morality strictly speaking.

The Nkundɔ́ possesses a varied and extensive list of obscene words -- nor is he alone in this respect. [58] We are not compiling a dictionary, and therefore we will not list them. What interests us are the circumstances that make these words indecent and under which a proper use of them impossible. The circumstances provide us with a criterion of the degree of obscenity of a word or expression. Let us say at once that we include in this category not only terms applied to organs and phenomena which are of a sexual nature strictly speaking, but also words pertaining to certain anatomical parts or physiological functions such as, for example, excretion, hair and tattooing found on private parts, and the female garment called efufa. We should also point out that some tribes will consider expressions obscene which do not shock others at all.

835 encounter it only in connection with magical practices and sorcery
759 (botɛ́, plural betɛ́), for which it is the nimbo, that is, the condition without which the betɛ́ would lack efficacy. If the nimbo is not observed, the botɛ́ turns against its owner and, by a reversal of its effect (bosesengano), brings death to the latter. Therefore the interested parties submit to these degrading requirements despite their natural repugnance. Depending on the case, incest with the mother, the daughter, or the sister is required. The first of these eventualities is the most repugnant to our natives. Though it goes altogether against the grain to do so, the mother submits to this ignominy to save the life of her foolhardy and greedy son.

[167] The nimbo of incest does not exist in all botɛ́. It even seems to have been absent from the betɛ́ which are ancient and purely Nkundó. It is found primarily in the big modern betɛ́, which have been imported from other peoples or invented on the spot since colonization. (1)

1. See Kaptein, in Congo, 1922, Vol. 1, p. 534.

Article VIII. Love Philters

852 The Nkundó are familiar with two love philters, the efɔ́ndɛ́ and the bontílí. Other modern betɛ́ may produce the same effect in part or secondarily. Here [101] we will only deal with the first two, which are "pure" and ancient love philters.

The love philters (botɛ́ w'ɛ̌langyɛ́) serve to gain the heart of a young girl as much as to entice a married woman away from her husband.

1. Efɔ́ndɛ́

Efɔ́ndɛ (1) is a common charm. Anyone can procure it from the

1. Efɔ́ndɛ is often used as a synonym of ɛlangyɛ́ in its sexual meaning.

maker in consideration of the appropriate payment, of course. Various kinds of efɔ́ndɛ́ exist, differing as to the ingredients used, the manner

584 power to settle disputes. They claim their share of the remuneration from the ndonga. According to the saying -- in archaic language -- bonε wɔ̂ ndonga nd'ɔ̂ dombε, "the power (literally, "the medicine") of the ndonga resides in the judges." Not that the judges themselves have the right or the power to intervene in matrimonial palavers. But they are that many additional witnesses. If the day comes when there is a dispute on the subject of the bride price, especially at the time of a divorce, the ndonga can call on them to help him refresh his memory and thus avoid difficulties. For it can easily happen that after several years the official witness has only a vague and approximate recollection of what was paid. If the judges do not receive anything at the time of payment, they will refuse to give their assistance at the critical moment. It is therefore an intelligent policy to acquiesce to their desires even though strictly speaking they can invoke no real prerogatives.

179 584 622 At the present time the colonial government, having established districts and named chiefs, the latter have had attributed to them the right to officially act as ndonga in matrimonial matters, or at least they have taken advantage of the powers given them and done so. In general [111] they summon the judges of the district at the same time, and the matter is entered after a fashion in the register of settlements. The chief's presence as a witness may have some value, since he can provide additional testimony and writes down the amount of the bride price. But his presence, on the other hand, has the disadvantage of involving him in matters which all in all are none of his business. We are not speaking here of cases in which he or some relatives of his are interested parties in the palaver. If he would be content to be a passive witness and enter the transactions that take place, the situation would be perfect.

192 184 It is probable that etymologically the word ndonga is derived from the verb root long, intransitive longam, "to be in order, arranged," transitive longy, "to arrange, make as it should be." In addition to the word ndonga, which is used west of the Lulaka, we find the word bokɔlo used among the Bɔ́ngɛ́ and the Bɔ́yɛ́ (as well as the Elɔ́ngɛ́), and ntombi among the Injɔlɔ. The latter term could be the same word as its homonym which means "spy" and is derived from the verb

192 tomba, "to spy"; the former may be an extension of the meaning of
184 the word bokilo, "promise." (1)

[572] 1. Note in passing that a ndonga is also necessary for the boseka, or contract of friendship and mutual assistance. (See Chapter I, Part 1, Article III.)

Article III. The Engagement

584 585 1. The payment of the ikulí

The engagement begins with the first bride-price payment, which in former times was an arrow and for that reason is called likulí [554] or ilulí. If the suitor was very rich, he sometimes gave an ingóndí knife or even an empíta. A poorer one would merely give the shaft of an arrow. Nowadays 1 or 2 copper rings are given. But the original name of this payment has been retained.

Arriving at the home of the father of his intended, [112] the suitor, his father (or a substitute for him), the ndonga(s) and often other relatives as well, sit down on one side of the lofnjí (the court in front of a dwelling), after an exchange of the usual courtesies. The girl and the representatives of her family sit down on the opposite side. As in all matters that a Nkundó has to settle, the host begins by inquiring into the reason for the visit. The young man's father answers: "We have come to ask for your daughter for our son." "How do you ask for her?" "We ask for her in marriage." These preliminary negotiations are called simply dwana nsango, "to ask each other for news."

Then the girl's father asks: "Who will bring the liníng (banana) or the bonyélu (partially ripe banana), that is, the gifts?" Through this figurative expression he asks who has been proposed as ndonga. The young man's father replies: so-and-so, and so-and-so. When they have been accepted, the fiancée's father has bananas, smoked fish, and sometimes hens brought in, and the witness passes them over to the future husband's group.

4. The amount of the walo

583* Formerly the amount of the walo averaged 20 to 30 bakonga, or their equivalent. The value of any object included in the bride [916] price could be calculated in copper, so that the konga was, so to speak, the monetary unit of the Nkundó.

At the present time in the districts near Flandria, the minimum is from 55 to 60 rings. Among the Bofingi and the Inkile the rings [914] are noticeably bigger and their weight in copper or brass is greater; there the minimum can be 30 rings. Elsewhere the figure is a good deal higher.

The price of the walo generally exceeds the minimum, which is found rather rarely. The average is about 60 to 80 rings. The number of 200 is reached only in extremely rare cases and it is exceeded even less frequently (see cases given below).

Differences in the amount of the walo are due primarily to the relative wealth of the contracting parties, the husband's valuation of his wife, the greed of the latter's parents, and the size of the bride price demanded for the woman they want to obtain with their daughter's (sister's) bride price. The cases of women who have left their previous husbands also must not be forgotten, for the new bride price must serve to reimburse him.

The amount of the walo may also be increased to satisfy the [556] vanity of the woman, who wants to appear superior to her companions, or of the husband, who wants to be recognized as very wealthy. (1)

> 1. The man who pays a great deal for his wife is given the honorific epithet esikobwo, "wells and mushrooms." All can find as much water as they want at wells, and there the mushrooms multiply. Thus many can benefit from the riches brought by the son-in-law.

[578] It is not unusual to hear of a woman boasting in the course of a dispute: "I am not a slave; my husband paid so-and-so much for me. [138] But you -- your husband doesn't love you, or else he is poor, for he paid only so much."

to leave her husband and he, in revenge, were to lay hands on her mother or on one of the other wives of the clan. (1) [148]

1. See Chapter VI, Article VII, 4, (1), and Chapter VIII, Article II, 1.

7) Lombɛ: a wide shoulder strap made of fur or braided [124] bokombo reeds (Calamus sp.), though valuables of equal worth (one knife or a konga) may be given. Nowadays this boɛngo consists of 2 or 3 rings; it goes to the mother in compensation for the wearying burden of carrying and nursing her daughter. (1)

1. Note that when a mother-in-law brings a child into the world, her son-in-law sends her a shoulder strap of liengɛ otterskin or a konga of equivalent value. He does not repeat this gift at each birth, however.

[125] 8) Botɔtowɛ bya nkwɛ: leaves of the bonkongɛ bush used to remove, wipe off, and carry away (tɔta) a child's excrement. This boɛngo consists of a ring and goes to the mother as compensation for her performance of these tasks. In the absence of the mother, it is claimed by another of the father's wives or by a female relative of the mother.

[126] 9) The bojingɛ, "hunting net," is demanded in many villages for no special reason. Certain clans, however, scoffed at by others because they have few members, officially ask a man belonging to one of the latter and wishing to marry one of their daughters to bring a net, saying: "You make fun of us because we have no people; bring us a hunting net to surround and enclose us, since we are not many." Thus the village of Boyela of the Bakɛla, never gives one of its members in marriage without this boɛngo.

[119] 10) Wɛngɛ w'ɛɛkɛ: a boɛngo which is not known everywhere but which is customary in certain groups, for example among the Bakɛla. One of the woman's relatives takes a piece of a young thorny trunk of the wɛngɛ tree. Having scraped one end of it, he holds this

583x payment of the bride price with the bosongo as he was committed to do through the payment of the ikuli and the ndanga. If he does not, the bond between him and his father-in-law is automatically broken, and consequently he is unable to obtain another wife to replace the deceased, and he loses the rights over one of his own daughters. Actually, we will have to come back to this question in Chapter IX, Article IX, 2.

These rules show how great a difference exists between the walo and the bosongo: in the one case, upon the death of the woman prior to the payment, an indemnity is imposed for a transgression in the eyes of the law; in the other, there is a transaction to stabilize the financial rights of the clans involved.

From all the above considerations we may conclude that because of the special nature of the payment, the bosongo is very important for the stability of the marriage and the social position of the woman's clan. But from a legal point of view it is far less important than the walo, through which a woman becomes truly [164] a wife; for the payment creates no new social relationship either between the spouses or between the husband and his in-laws.

Article X. Purpose of the Bride Price

583x 607 Theoretically, the bride price is meant to procure a wife for one of the members of the family that has received it.

The woman who is married thanks to the bride price paid for another is called the latter's nkita. It seems to me that this word is etymologically related to nkitó, "profit, benefit" (the verb is -kitola). In the final analysis, both words may be derived from the root -kit, "to become."

[184] A synonym of nkita is bongíli (bongíji); it is used primarily by the Injólo but it is also known, though seldom employed, by the other tribes.

The woman whose bride price has served to procure the nkita is the latter's nkóló (literally, "mistress"). The Injólo as well as the [595] Bofingi also call her by the more tactful name, nyangongíji, "mother

926 Similarly, Mpumo received Lifomf, daughter of Ikɔlɛ as a
583 bɔ̀ndo. Her brother, Ndyɛ̀nlikala, ancestor of the Mbɛ̀ngɛ (Lɔ̀kɔ,
675 Ekonda), offered her to Mpumo in asking for peace. Mpumo married her in the regular manner. In his fight against the Ekonda this same Mpumo in the same manner obtained Bɔ̀ngɔ́, the sister of Bangɔ̀ndɔ́ of Mpɛ̀njwɛ (Wɛ̀yɛ).

Since the victor in war usually wanted to marry the woman in the proper fashion by paying a bride price, the handing over of a relative as bɔ̀ndo may be compared to the practice common in Europe in the Middle Ages, when a prince would marry his daughter or sister off to a competitor or an adversary to seal the peace between them. In both cases, therefore, a kind of political marriage is involved.

Article VI. Exchange.

583x When they speak of the exchange of women (yɛnjɛ, from the
●189 verb enja, "to exchange" in general), the tribes under discussion do not all refer to the same thing. According to the situation, several types of exchange may be distinguished.

1) The pure Nkundɔ́ have a practice of exchanging daughters, sisters, relatives. This exchange is always carried out through the payment of bride price and the agency of a ndonga. Thus two regular marriages by nkumbɔ́ are involved, and the term "exchange" is only very inappropriately applied to them. The two men who give each other their sisters in marriage are each contracting an ordinary marriage according to the usual norms.

2) Sometimes the term "exchange" is applied to the practice of ikɛ̀kelo, which is better explained through an example than by a long discussion. Suppose that Eale marries the woman Ambɛ́, Lokio, Eale's sister, [215] is married to Isia. Ambɛ́ leaves her husband for one of Isia's relatives. At the first opportunity Eale detains his sister Lokio at his home, thus taking her from her husband, and since his wife Ambɛ́ does not return to him, he hands his sister Lokio over to another man in marriage. Or suppose that Eale has married one of Isia's relatives, and Isia has married a relative of Eale. If one of the wives leaves her

husband, he takes his own relative back and gives her away in marriage elsewhere, using his right of ikfkolo. (1)

1. This noun is derived from the verb kfkola, "to guarantee," meaning in this case "to guarantee possession of one's bride-price valuables, one's capital."

As these descriptions show, the custom involves an exchange which is forced rather than voluntary and spontaneous. Nevertheless, it is sometimes called an exchange because it does not involve a divorce strictly speaking; there is no restitution of bride price by either party.

The two situations above therefore correspond only very inaccurately to the idea of an exchange of women. In the first instance, one cannot even speak of an exchange of wives.

3) Among the Bombwanja there is a practice which comes closer to the idea. The following is a historical example: Ikfitf loves Eanga, a widow of Ekofo's father. Ekofo in turn loves Ilonga, widow of Ikfitf's father. They exchange these two women, who are their wives by right of inheritance. It may even happen that Ikfitf, who is very fond of Eanga, gives Ekofo a woman from his own harem who loves this man. These exchanges are made without the payment of a bride price, but through the agency of the ndonga who previously participated at the first nkumbó.

This is a real exchange of women. As we have seen, it may be made in two ways -- an exchange of widows or the exchange of a widow for a real wife. From the standpoint of law and justice the two situations are identical; the women exchanged belong to the men exchanging them, who are legally [216] their husbands. But only in the second instance is there an exchange of a woman who is a wife not only legally but actually, with all the rights and duties of a wife. But such a wife is given only by one of the parties. This is still not the exchange of wife for wife strictly and properly speaking.

The distinction we have made between a wife by law and a wife by fact is of some importance. Actual conjugal life introduces

583 a new element from the legal standpoint. This is clearly apparent
184 in the repugnance with which these same Bombwanja who practice the form of exchange just described regard an exchange pure and simple, which will be described below.

The exchange of widows is also practiced by the Elingɛ. Like the Bombwanja, they also have the two forms of quasi-exchange described at the beginning of this article.

4) On the other hand, a true exchange of wives exists among the riverain peoples known as the Bodyɛ and the Longa (1); in their

> 1. They live near the mouth of the Salonga (in the villages of Bonsela, Pompuɛ, Nkɛɛe, Bombomba, Isakɛ, etc.)

dialect it is called iengyɛ. Two men exchange wives. If the bride price of one is greater than that of the other, the difference is refunded. Such an exchange is carried out with the consent of the women involved.

583 Let us see how such an exchange usually comes about. Imagine
184 two men, Bokulɛ and Mpolɛ, with their respective wives, Mbindo
152 and Baɛnɛ. Suppose that Bokulɛ falls in love with Baɛnɛ, the wife
[217] of Mpolɛ, and the pair become involved in an adulterous relationship. There is a cooling of Baɛnɛ's love for her husband Mpolɛ; she performs fewer and fewer services for him, etc. The same thing happens to Bokulɛ's relationship with his wife Mbindo. The latter is jealous; her patience is soon at an end. She discusses the matter with Mpolɛ, her rival's husband. "See how your wife deceives you; she no longer loves you. My husband is forsaking me [217] for her; he no longer loves me. This is a challenge to you as well as to me. If you are a man (1), pick up the challenge."

> 1. "Man" in the sense of vir (jwende); the meaning is: "If you have any courage, show that you are not a coward."

583x 184 152 According to the native view, a man must take this woman home for the sake of his honor. If he did not do so, he would become the butt of malicious comments and scorn on the part of all, both men and women. He would be considered a coward, just as in European "cultured" society a man is considered a coward if he does not pick up the glove thrown down by his adversary.

The rejected woman's hatred for her husband is transformed into a love for the man who has been similarly hurt by her rival. The joint misfortune of the pair creates a mutual feeling of affection. The woman is accepted as wife and is thus saved from dishonor. The man, on his part, feels affection for the woman who offers him her heart and preserves his good name. Harmony is at last established among all four of them, the two men arrange the matter of bride price in the way we have described, and then they live in peace without any enmity toward one another.

583x 581 184 This way of handling the situation is very strange to us, because it is indefensible from the point of view of a sound philosophy and of Catholic morality. But it seems normal to the natives. The pagan conscience has no trouble coming to terms with it, since no pagan law explicitly prohibits such behavior. Everyone comes to an agreement in the end, and that is all their conscience requires. Everything considered, there is no infraction of the rights of any individual, and since the native mentality is not concerned with morality as we conceive of it, this solution seems altogether natural to them.

Nevertheless, the ethnic groups who do not practice this true exchange in no way approve of it. Not that they fail to understand the psychology underlying this practice; on the contrary, if the situation arises they accept it. But they condemn [218] the legal procedure. They require that the two marriages be broken in the regular fashion and that two new marriages be contracted. That is, they demand the restitution and payment of the bride prices through the ndonga and through the respective parents of the women. For them therefore an exchange is not a true marriage, but a sort of sale and purchase. Also, from their point of view, the women who have been exchanged are slaves and not wives, because they live with their

583 men although their first marriage has not been broken and no new
581 marriage agreement has been concluded.
184 The data given above provides no confirmation in the
[114] Nkundó tribes under study of the statement made by Engels "Les Wangata [The Wangata]," Revue congolaise, 1910, p. 35) that among the Wangata "her husband can exchange her . . . she can make no protest." (1)

1. The Ekonda apply the term lienjá only to an exchange of daughters or sisters. They have a specific term: mpéngó. Note, by the way, that certain Mbólé tribes who practice a true wife exchange designate it by the same name: impéngó.

Article VII. Purchase

432 The purchase of women is not practiced by the Nkundó tribes
562 under discussion here nor even by the Bombwanja. The practice is to
588 be found only among the Elingá. What is involved is not a marriage by means of a bride price but a real purchase; that is, a man buys a woman from her husband for a certain sum. He does not go through the woman's parents, as in an ordinary marriage by bride-price payment, but addresses himself directly to the husband.

In general it is the woman who makes the proposal that a man buy her in this manner. Sometimes a man wants to take a woman and
[121] first comes to an agreement with her. Before the Europeans arrived such a situation generally led to a war between clans or villages. After an armistice the palaver was settled, and the [219] purchaser paid the husband. Nowadays, since the Nkundó no longer dare to
[117] fight because of the legal sanctions that inevitably follow, when a woman abandons her husband for another man who wants to buy her, the parties involved bring the palaver before the judges. As the woman wants only her new husband, and as, on the other hand, war and the punishment of women have been abolished, the first husband has no

carried out by the ordinary means of the payment and restitution of a bride price.

At the present time cases of purchase are becoming increasingly rare. This change is probably due to a wider distribution of wealth which has produced a second change, namely that the man makes the initial proposal rather than the woman, who did so according to the ancient custom.

The woman's invitation is public. The man must reply for the sake of his honor. As in the case of an exchange among the Boɗyá, he can only escape mockery by following through. If he did not, he would be considered a coward. He would be treated as a pariah; his wife (wives) would leave him, and he would no longer be included in the company of his fellows or at their meals.

Although strictly speaking the matter is outside the limits of this study, it seems to me that it is not irrelevant to mention, for the sake of comparison, that wife purchase is also practiced among the Ntómbá (Wáŋgatá, Ikengo) and the Bolénge (or Bofiji) between the Congo and the Boloko. They call it by the same name -- isómba, "purchase," and the man who buys in bosómbi, "purchaser." The woman always invites the man by sending him a piece of the ribs of a banana leaf, called a bonengé. She does this publicly; she hands the bonengé to a relative or friend and says to him out loud and in front of everyone, "Take this bonengé to so-and-so for me, so that he will come and buy me."

The same custom still exists in certain Ekonda settlements [184] under the jurisdiction of the Bikoro station, such as the Lonyanyanga, Bosango, Balíngo, Babonja, etc., but not in the others, which are within the territory of the Kiri (Buli) station. It is called ehómbaka or esómbaka (the root and [222] the meaning are the same as those of lisómbí and isómba). Since these peoples are neighbors of the above-mentioned Ntómbá and of other Ntómbá living near the lake which bears their name (in a distorted form) and since, on the other hand, the rest of the Ekonda do not know this custom, we may assume that it was introduced to them by their neighbors to the north and to the west.

M 584 582 untangle all the threads. Thus it happens that young people form relationships with the intention of marrying without knowing that they are related; they are warned only by the opposition and ensuing explanations of the elders.

We may conclude that marriage among descendants of a common ancestor is generally prohibited if they live in the same village. It is frequently permitted on the other hand, if they belong to different villages, provided that they are not, at the same time, related to one of the ancestresses.

M 582 835 Clearly, it is difficult to say what precise degree of kinship formed the basis for the prohibition of or permission for a marriage between descendants of a common ancestor, or what are the boundaries of an exogamous grouping.

M [611] It is also apparent from the preceding observations -- as from the examination of affinity as an obstacle to marriage -- that the descent from a common mother is a more important factor than descent from the father. This does not give proof of a form of matriarchy, though it could be the remains or the beginning of one, or could provide a partial explanation for one. It stems quite simply M [842] from the Nkundó notions concerning procreation, in which they M [602] attribute the major role to the mother. There is also the fact that greater shame is attached to being united with a person descended M [593] from the same woman, and finally the fact that they feel a stronger affection for the mother than for the father (a sentiment [250] which is accentuated by polygamy). The three causes are closely related.

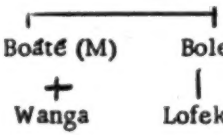
M 184 582 Finally, it should be noted that there is a group among the Nkundó we are discussing which is less strict than the others in this matter. The relatives among whom marriage is prohibited is definitely more limited; that is, their exogamous groupings are more limited. The people in question are the Bongale (see Introduction), and the same phenomenon may be observed among the Elíngá. (1)

P [582]

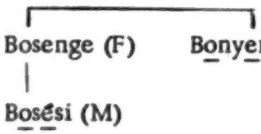
1. The Batswá are still more liberal, and in this respect their practices differ very little from ancient European laws and customs.

582 604 Example 8 (continued)

or



Example 9



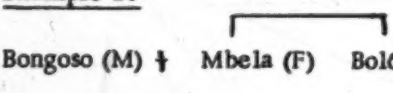
Bosési may marry Eúmé.

The same rules apply equally to great-uncles and great-aunts, and to cousins who are not equals (related as "father" and "son"; see the table of kinship relations and terminology in the appendix).

582 607 C. Equals in the collateral line: The degree of relationship is of no importance, for example, marriage with an older sister (or cousin) of the spouse is forbidden; marriage with a younger sister is permitted. The same rule applies to women, but after the husband's death an exception is sometimes made in the elder brother's favor in order to facilitate inheritance arrangements. Only the Boángí -- like the Elánga of Losanganya -- make no distinction between elder and younger siblings and always permit the marriage. They are even beginning to be imitated by the Injólo.

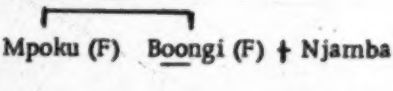
● [184]

Example 10



Bongoso may marry Bolófo.

Example 11



Njamba may not marry Mpoku.

602 brings forth reprimands on the part of the husband and his parents which obviously can easily degenerate into quarrels. If the omissions are so frequent and of such a nature that they can no longer be explained as simply forgetting, a whim, or a fit of peevishness, but [299] are taken to indicate spitefulness or vulgarity, the matter is [627] brought before the ndonga (who is often assisted by the family tribunal) or brought before the authority constituted by the woman's kin. If in spite of everything the expected improvement does not take place, the break-up is inevitable.

606 The husband's father and mother extend the same affection to their son's wife as they feel toward him. They consider her their own child, and it is not unusual to find that their love for the wife equals their feeling for their own son. She is only a relative by marriage, but out of affection for her they call her their child. She, for [601] her part, does not use toward them the term bakanga (or bakilo) but out of filial respect calls them "father" and "mother." Exceptions to this practice may be found, however.

606 224 If the father (and those who fall in the same category such as uncles, elder brothers, etc.) kills a large game animal, he is expected to give his son's (or brother's, etc.) wife a piece of meat, whose size depends on the number of daughters-in-law he has and which consists of one or several chops (bokalako) (1) and the piece at

1. Called lieto among the Bolengé and the tribes of the Losanganya.

the nape of the neck (botombya).

606 835 Illicit relations between the husband's father and h[illegible]aughter-in-law would be an unheard of crime. The same would be true with respect to any of the "superior" relatives. (2) The laws regulating

[178] [194] 2. Only the Boangi -- like the Elangá of the Losanganya - allow relations between a brother and the wife of his junior; and they are already beginning to find imitators among their neighbors to the southeast, the Injolo.

604 937 579 579 An uncle (see D above) is not entirely free to cure his nephew's (F) passion unless he is the nkɔ́lɔ́ of his sister (E), that is, unless the mother (C) of his sister (E) is the nkita of his aunt (B), [307] who is the sister of his father (A). Indeed in that case his sister may not complain, for she owes him respect and submission; her subordination to her brother and master is greater than the gratitude he owes her for any riches he may have obtained through her or on her account.

603 937 D. In the case of the relationship of a grandson (bonkáná) to his grandfather's wives, his freedom is, in practice, complete. Actually, among the Nkundɔ́ the affection of a grandfather (nkɔ́kɔ) for his own grandson often exceeds his love for his own son and completely degenerates into weakness. (1) The grandfather puts up with all his

1. As happens very often also in Europe. See Chapter I, Part 1, Article I, 3.

grandson's carryings-on, his whims, all his teasing, his insults, etc.

After illicit relations the grandson sometimes carries his insolence so far as to spontaneously send his grandfather a "mock" indemnity in the form of a basket filled with stones in the place of copper rings.

626 603 937 Although the grandfather treats his grandson with good humor, public opinion does not favor the latter's conduct, though it is more lenient than in the cases described above. The public reaction, as well as the sending of the "mock" fine, shows that in principle these relations are censurable and condemned. Because of present circum- [178] stances, particularly marriage at an earlier age than in the past, the age difference between a grandson and his grandfather's wives has increased considerably in the constantly growing number of cases, and their relations have proportionately decreased. (2) [308]

[184] 2. We have seen above that other Nkundɔ́ tribes are even less strict in these matters. On the other hand, the Ekonda, a Nkundɔ́ group living on Lake Leopold II, have a

603 837 626 184

higher morality -- in our terms. Among them the question of relations between a woman and her husband's son, younger brother, etc., does not even arise. Have they been influenced by some neighboring tribe? Or must we attribute the inferior morality of some of the tribes in this respect to decadence.

837 602

The following conclusions emerge from this long description:

1) Relations between a man and the wife of his son, younger brother, etc., in short of anyone inferior to him in the family hierarchy, are always strictly prohibited and never occur.

2) They do occur on the other hand between an inferior and the wife of his senior and superior. The degree of kinship between the husband and the culprit plays a considerable role in determining the seriousness or triviality of an infraction, the sanctions applied, and the various consequences. Some relations are accepted, others are censured with varying degrees of leniency, still others are pitilessly criticized.

3) In these matters a distinction may be made between two aspects:

a) the husband's reaction and the repression of the illicit relations;

b) the judgment of public opinion;

or:

a) the financial aspect;

b) the moral aspect -- to use that term for want of a better one.

Sometimes a third element comes into play, namely the intervention of the family on the side of the culprit against the injured husband who, for one reason or another, is in the wrong himself.

602 837 694

a) The usual sanction for adultery is, for the man, an indemnity to pay. But such a payment cannot be made since no financial transaction -- strictly speaking at least -- may be made

484 movement and therefore serves as the Nkundó prison. But in addition, if it is applied for a long time, it becomes a real torture; the skin becomes painful and comes off, inflammations readily appear, and bugs sometimes lodge there.

As soon as the woman's family hears (through the ndonga) that she is being so tortured, they often come and beg her husband to [576] free her. To pacify and propitiate him, they offer him an ad hoc payment, that is, a bofondo of a few copper rings. Generally, he yields to their entreaties. A good relationship and his respect toward them require that he not remain indifferent to their supplications, especially as he needs them for the stability of the marriage and the good functioning of the household.

2) Byéngetanyi, or handcuffs, which consist of sticks attached either to the wrists or to the ankles (to prevent walking), or to both arms and feet. Two sticks were used, one above and one below, with the limb placed in between, and they were tied with ropes that were attached and fastened in notches made at [317] each end of the sticks. In rare instances the wrists were bound. To increase the pain and immobility, the ropes were shrunk and hardened by pouring water on them. These handcuffs were generally added to the etáka and were never applied alone.

3) Exposure to the bites of nkongòló ants. In the region under [194] discussion, I have never heard the people speak of exposure to bafumba (Dorylus), or even to the venomous benkénkóme. This fact contrasts with the practice of other Mongo tribes and with the content of certain legends (evolution?).

4) The pouring of water containing pepper into the vagina. Sometimes the genital organs were rubbed with crushed pepper.

5) Exposure of the sex organs to fire. A burning log was held near them.

The last two types of torture were the most dreadful.

We can add one last form of punishment which is derived from the same legal rules, although it is not a torture:

[634] 6) Nudity. The husband tears off the guilty woman's garments and thus exposes her to public shame. Even if she resorts to using leaves, no one mistakes the situation, and her shame is only partly reduced.

536^ 554 The name bolɛmbɛ́ seems to come from the fact that for an instant during the installation ceremony the woman is naked. In fact in certain dialects the word means "nudity."

[551] Nowadays this name is common among Nkundó women (rarely men), but it does not indicate that they are bolɛmbɛ́. The name is borne in memory of ancestresses or relatives who had that position and is transmitted in the family like any other name.

All the tribes under discussion here use the same term, • [ ] bolɛmbɛ́. The Bombomba alone say bofíɛ́. (2)

2. Elsewhere, as in the Losangaya region, among the Bosaka, etc., the bolɛmbɛ́ is called ekila (interdiction, taboo).

It is clear from everything that has been said that the nkɔndɛ́ and the bolɛmbɛ́ have nothing in common with each other. [353] The two institutions are decidedly different. Nowadays they are beginning to be confused with each other, however. [ ] For the installation of a bolɛmbɛ́ has become extremely rare, and in some regions it has already disappeared. The colonial government has established districts and appointed chiefs in charge of them. Very frequently, they are not those who in the purely indigenous order would have been the most influential men, the masters, those who would have the biggest say in their society, who would be said to have the iɔkɔ, the first place.

As far as I have been able to observe, the other tribes on the equator also have the two types of wives with special positions, who bear names which vary with the dialects.

[ ] 536^ 554 Do the Ndɔmbɛ and the Bolɛngɛ between the Bolɔlɔ and the Congo have only the bolɛmbɛ́? That is the conclusion one draws from Engels' study of the Wangata (Revue congolaise, Vol. 2, no. 1, p. 33). If that were so, the frequent contacts with this people may have increased the confusion even more. Natives who are strangers to the Bolɛngɛ tribe but who have lived many years among them as catechists, have maintained, however, that

is the one who brings her to her husband and is, at the same time, nkonga for the payment of the bride price, which is made as for any woman. The expression is: X ekitumia bokitaf Y ebisa, "X repeats her sister Y ebisa."

In case of the elder's absence or upon her death, the ebisa replaces her or inherits all her rights in the household.

The elder relative cares a great deal about having her ebisa, because as a result she rises in her husband's estimation and she herself has an assistant in her work and a confidante in her troubles. The ebisa herself has the advantage of not being alone or abandoned at the beginning of her marriage, but of being able to count on a protector and guide, and if her elder occupies a privileged rank in the harem, she has the certainty of sharing her prerogatives and the likelihood of one day succeeding her. [355]

The term ebisa is used by the Nkundó between the Jwalí and the Boloko, and by the Ionda. The Bombwanja designate such a woman by the name loambwá or loambyá. The Bofingí and the Injélé also call her loambyá. (1)

1. The Bonyanga say mbambwá or loambwá. Out of respect they sometimes call her bongílí and the woman who has brought her nyangongílí. (See also Chapter II, Article X, and Chapter VI, Article VI.) The Ekonda call her bombéka or bomiéka (mbéka, "last").

Ebisa may be related to the root bí, from which is derived the verb bitingana, "to be united." Loambwá or loambyá are derived from bamb, which means: 1) "to be united" and 2) "to follow" (in order, in rank).

These names indicate the nature of this marriage that does not arise from direct relations between husband and wife but is established through the medium of another preceding marriage. Or to express the situation in Lonkundó: Ifa lilíla jí'ándé mónga, ásmana l'ótho mbambá, "this is not a marriage which comes

842 differences can be found here, although they are less apparent to
855 a European observer since we usually approach the natives as a
152 group and our contact with them is often too impersonal.

2. Abortion

947 A great enemy of maternal love is the practice of abortion, which has always been known to the Nkundó. Here we cannot describe all the prescriptions used for that purpose. It will be sufficient to enumerate the reasons for which they have recourse to this practice. They are as follows:

1) A woman's lasciviousness: the procreation and subsequent care of a child to some extent prevent the indulging in carnal pleasures. Formerly this cause of abortion was nonexistent or very [178] rare. Needless to say, it has become more common, especially in the centers where it is constantly on the increase and where, in addition, occasional or regular "housekeepers" learn new means of sterilization and abortion.

2) A woman's antipathy or persistent anger toward her husband may encourage her to prevent conception or destroy its effect.

3) An excessive weakening of the mother's organism caused by a large number of conceptions and childbirths at too short intervals.

4) The encumberance and the difficulty of watching, carrying, and taking care of many small children -- bálota bolɛ́kɛ́sano [467] [535] wá bána mátélá mátélá. This reason is especially important for well-known dancers.

It goes without saying that several of these motives may be combined in the same person. For instance, I knew of a woman who aborted at the time of her eighth child. Her recurrent pregnancies, together with continuous work, had greatly reduced her strength. A palaver with her husband was the last straw; she decided to get rid of the fruit she carried in her body.

Outside of these exceptions the natives of this country ardently desire their own continuation through a large number of progeny. (1)

● [184]

1. The same is not true elsewhere. Examples to that effect are cited from regions that are

947
●[84] already more "civilized," such as the neighborhood of Coquilhatville and the Losanganya region.

947 Attention should be drawn to the danger of an increase in
948 abortions for a new reason, namely the shame of giving birth outside of wedlock. As we have seen in Chapter I, Part II, Article IV, 3, premarital pregnancies have existed since time immemorial without resulting either in remorse or in palavers. Through the teaching of Christian morality, the feeling of shame must sooner or later be extended to this phenomenon. In explaining the evil of fornication, care should therefore be taken to insist on the fact that transgressing the Fifth Commandment by abortion is a far greater evil.

947 Voluntary abortion is not considered a moral error by the
945 Nkundó. (2) In their eyes an imperfectly formed fetus, not viable,

2. An attitude which also exists in Europe at the present time, according to Haenecour in Kultuurleven, Vol. 6, no. 1, p. 21 (1935), and the brochure by Prof. D. Schockaert quoted there.

is not yet a man. It is only a human being in the process of formation, in potentia. Hence the custom of burying the aborted child
947 in the [468] hut or quite near it. Thus the spirit responsible for the
[744] *pregnancy will see that it is respected and repeat its benevolent*
[748] action. (1)

1. Others explain this custom by saying that the fetus already has a soul which remains near the tiny body and will take the first opportunity to re-enter the mother's body.

But if it is voluntary an abortion is always a wrong against family and society, for it deprives the family of a member on whom

851 birth of a child involves a few prohibitions which affect the whole village and apply to the Batswá as well as the Bantó. They do not affect inhabitants of a portion of the village which is separated by a swamp from the group where the happy event has occurred. Those bound by the prohibitions may no longer go to "work" -- that is, to work in the fields, fetch food or firewood, build a hunting enclosure or a fishing weir, or work at the building or repair of a house. An infraction of this rule would result in the destruction of the fruit of all their labor: the fields would no longer produce, and no beast or fish would be caught. This deadly influence would [494] extend to all crops, etc. no matter whom they belong to. Nevertheless, there is nothing wrong in fetching firewood from the forest, harvesting manioc from a ripe field, or cutting the fruit of the palm.

Strictly speaking, these prohibitions touch only persons who have seen the newborn child. But since no one fails to go and admire it, all are subject to them. The prohibitions remain in effect until the umbilical cord is detached. Some tribes, however, have the more convenient custom of limiting its duration to the day of the child's birth.

2. The hygiene of mother and child

[849] 846 The umbilical cord (lokóki) is cut near the middle. An incision is made near the infant's navel. Each day a concoction of herbs is poured on the part of the cord that is still attached and white sand is put on it to make it dry more rapidly. When the end falls off, a powder made of scorched banana is applied to the wound.

In order to prevent the weakening of a woman's abdomen, it is bound with a belt made of bands of the dried bark of the banana tree (ekunú).

The assistants wash the mother and child. On the mother they place dried leaves or bark of the banana tree which have been carefully crumpled. They are put on like panties to catch the blood and are replaced by new ones whenever necessary. Nowadays pieces of cloth are often used; they are put on like a man's garment.

for and fed so that she may regain her strength rapidly. [486]

3. Seclusion

After childbirth the mother remains secluded (-ulama) in her hut for several weeks -- two, three, or more, depending on circumstances and especially on her husband's social position. Her seclusion is called julé. The hut bears the same name, or else it is called jonga, "palm leaf." Sometimes the term ekulé is also applied to it, denoting the period of seclusion with all the special regulations it involves. These are as follows:

1) Meals. In some tribes the woman may already eat on the day of the delivery. But among others she is only permitted to drink. The reason for this fast is given in the form of a legend. One day long ago a Botswa asked his master for a little manioc, but the master refused to give it to him. The master's wife had just given birth. Annoyed by the refusal, the Botswa cursed his master, saying: "From now on your women will have to fast the day they give birth." (1) Another explanation is that at sometime in the past someone refused food to a slave who was about to be sacrificed at a feast of the lifting of mourning. Tribes and villages that do not give any reason of this sort permit a woman to eat in the evening, if the delivery takes place in the morning.

1. Batswa women never fast under such circumstances.

A mother's first meal is prepared by a woman who has performed the carnal act the preceding night. She goes to draw water, and on her return she fastens or attaches over the door of the seclusion hut a piece of palm (jonga) or, among the Bombwanja, a piece of dried banana leaf; in this way she informs everyone that it is a house of ekulé. Then she prepares the food, which consists of bananas with fish or a hen in palm-oil sauce. It is eaten by the mother and her husband as well as the cook. Their very young children may also delight in it, but [487] the older ones, approaching puberty, may not. The newborn child is given a tiny bit of the sauce to taste.

the sap, which she then mixes with water. The resulting liquid is oily and foams like soap. She places a few drops on a piece of banana leaf and makes a sachet of it. She holds this against the breast for a certain time until the boil, similar to a blood clot or a piece of liver, leaves the breast and enters the sachet. She then shows it to those present. From then on the mother can nurse her child without fear; her milk has become healthy and normal.

2) The mother's public confession must include the names of all the men with whom she has had carnal relations since the child's conception. Other groups, such as the Inɔ́kɔ́ , extend this obligation even to instances preceding that moment but which have not been declared at a previous occasion. The confession is public. The masseuse related to the husband begins to crush the leaves to be used in rubbing the breast; as she moves the pestle and says to the mother, "Name a man." The mother replies by giving a name. The masseuse says nyonge, "indemnity." Then all those present say yengɔ́, yengɔ́, yengɔ́, "absolved." Then it is the other masseuse's turn, and she interrogates the mother in the same way. The process continues till all the names have been cited. If [495] the mother cites the name of a man who is a close relative of her husband and who therefore does not need to pay an indemnity, the masseuse does not reply nyonge. Instead a member of the husband's clan makes the gesture signifying exemption: he holds the kernel of a palm nut (lolikɔ́) in his left hand and throws it by means of a small board which he holds in his right. Among the Inɔ́kɔ́ the man takes two kernels and strikes them against each other and then throws them away. Were the woman to suppress a name the child would die. If she has no admission to make, she replies, "No one besides my husband."

The indemnity that must be paid by those who are obligated to do so consists of a hen and a bunch of bananas (or their cash value) which are to be given to the masseuses, who will then divide them. Were the accused to refuse, the husband would demand a regular indemnity from him after the end of the seclusion.

The Bombwanja have this confession at the time of the quickening of the fetus. A few old women married into the clan carry out the interrogation. The kernel of the fruit of the palm is thrown by means of a knife.

602 member is, as it were, identified with that member, so that, for in-
601 stance, all younger sisters and female cousins of one spouse become "wives" of all the younger brothers and male cousins of the other spouse. One must really have the legal sense and the patience and the capacity for palaver and unravelling of an old Nkundo to make sense out all of these relationships. They themselves compare them, in fact, with the inextricable clew of the intestines of a sort of dwarf crocodile: bosolo bya lokekele.

9. Exogamy

613 582 The term, "exogamic clan," often heard or encountered in writings, is also, at least in the Nkundo-Mongo society, very misleading. The group of persons with whom marriage is forbidden does not constitute any common entity; it differs from person to person. Two half brothers can have the same paternal clan but differ in maternal clan; they can have the same maternal clan and different paternal clans. Marriages are forbidden for older brothers and sisters that are permitted for the younger ones. The rules differ from one blood relation to another, from blood relation with relative-by-marriage to blood relation with relative-by-marriage, from relative-by-marriage with relative-by-marriage to relative-by-marriage with relative-by-marriage.

If one still wishes to put the law of exogamy into European terms, then one might say: 1) blood relationship forbids marriage insofar as the blood relationship is recognized. This recognition varies from clan group to clan group. Sometimes in the same legal but extended clan, an exception is made to this recognition; mostly, however, the different autonomous clans which descend from the same distant ancestor are still bound by the law of exogamy. Generally, groups which have the same father but a different mother /160/ separate most quickly. 2) Relationship (other than blood) forbids marriage—insofar as the relationship is recognized between the parents of spouses; it sometimes permits marriage between children of spouses.

613 582 184 Here it should be observed once again, however, that the customs differ from region to region as regards this recognition; that, for instance, the stepson in many regions may marry his stepmother in a regular marriage; and that the violations are less severely judged and punished in proportion to the degree to which the forbidden relationships diverge.

004 What is one to do if even in such cases it is taught, "One must respect" the native customs?

587 428 [584] The inheriting of wives existed everywhere; it was, in fact, the only wealth left behind by the native. The details of the distribution differed according to district or tribe. Thus, for instance, in some districts it was the eldest son who alone inherited all of the wives of his father. This was in order to preserve the rank and the clan of the family. Prestige and power actually depended only on the number of wives that one possessed. In this case, however, this eldest son had, in place of his father, to provide a wife for his younger brothers and the sons of his sisters. As far as impediments [582] to marriage were concerned, generally they strictly observed the impediment of blood relationship; two blood relatives, even in a distant degree, should never enter into marriage, [541] with the exception of the irregularities mentioned above. As for relatives by marriage, these do not exist for them in any degree. There is, nevertheless, one case that somewhat resembles relationship by marriage, namely, the Nkita might never be in the home of a man together with the woman whose Nkita she was. Thus, the son-in-law or the brother-in-law might never take the Nkita of his wife into his home. If, however, the wife had left or died, there was no further impediment.

587 428 431 When, like the inheritance above, the family had returned the bride price and had then married the woman to another man, this second husband also had to give a gift to the one who, according to the law of inheritance, had the right to the wife. This gift was called a hempanga.

587 428 If the wife who was freed by the family had children, only a part of the bride price had to be returned. Sometimes the wife was freed completely through her children. The children then remained with the family of the deceased husband, and they then represented the value of the bride price of their mother. If, however, such a woman was married again by her family, they demanded a second bride price for that.

587 428 583 Sometimes a single woman was the Nkita of several other women. In the inheritance several people then had a right over her, and everyone demanded his share. For instance, a young man

no compulsion. If one of the contracting parties fails to fulfil its pledges in this matter of giving part of the kill, or in anything else, the aggrieved party may call the council together. This consists not only of members of the *mokonda* and *okapa*, but of all elders of the village or villages connected with this particular one. The party judged in the wrong, whether *okapa* or *mokonda*, will be fined, the injured party receiving its share, and both parties will be charged to live together harmoniously and observe their contracts.

The power of the *nkumu* was apparently limited, and did not supersede that of the *monene mokonda*. When trials came up, the aggrieved party might go either to the *monene mokonda* or to the *nkumu*. If it was necessary to call the village elders together about it, both these authorities were present at the hearing. First the young men of the group were allowed to give their verdict, then the old men, after that *monene mokonda* (or the *mokoni e ele*), and finally the *nkumu* was given the privilege of the last word. He would comment on the opinions of each of the judges, criticizing one young man, commending another, and then giving his own verdict, at which the group would assent by saying, 'Even so, grandfather'. The whole group of judges would then fix the fines, a double portion of which went to the *nkumu*.

The actual manual labour which an *nkumu* may do excludes anything endangering life or limb, or requiring agility and speed. He may clear the bush for his gardens: this is a man's work. He may take part in the building of his houses, but may do no high work, and, among the inland groups, it is the work of the Batwa to put the roof on for him. The *nkumu* may also prepare pitfalls for catching game, but cannot engage in any other type of hunting or do any fishing. Digging a grave is prohibited, for, as we shall see, everything pertaining to death must be ignored by the *nkumu*.

Other rules affecting the daily life of the *nkumu* may be roughly divided into three: those affecting his person, those having to do with his food, and social regulations.

One of the great points of observance in the first class of regulations is the importance of the *mantula*. The *nkumu* must on no account be seen during daylight hours with an uncovered head. If he wishes relief from the cumbersome *mantula* he may take it off in the darkness of his house and put on an ordinary hat made of skins, and when night falls he may walk where he will bareheaded if he so desires. The skin hat, known as *londo*, may be made from two animals only, in the case of an *nkumu*, one being the *ekulapa*, a species of antelope with light-coloured hair, and the other the *pondo*, an animal resembling a beaver. The skin of the *ekulapa* may be used by anyone, but the *pondo* is reserved for the *nkumu* only with one exception. The skin of the *pondo* may also be used for the carrying strap for infants known as *nyombo*, which is worn over one shoulder in bandolier fashion. For the *nkumu* the skin of the *pondo* is limited to the informal hat, *londo*, and for making into the *lokata*, a pouch used for carrying small objects and worn like a sporran. As a corollary to the importance of the *mantula* may be noted the importance attached to the head of the *nkumu*, which must never be seen uncovered in daylight.

The Bonginda *nkumu* never wash in the daytime, but may wash at night with hot water. The inland *nkumu* never wash. Even the Bonginda *nkumu* never wash their heads, and no *nkumu* ever cuts his hair. If the *nkumu* becomes too greatly inconvenienced, one of his wives may dehorse his head, but only within the privacy of the house, by the light that enters the rear opening.

grasping the knife with his left hand, with his free right hand he drains a gourd of palm wine to gain courage, hits the nearest victim on the head with the empty gourd, then transfers the knife to his right hand. He is now ready for his work which he proceeds to do methodically, sustained by the heady wine and the rhythm of the drum. When he had finished one of the lines, a pause would be made to bring out the body for burial. Just before this is done an armed band rushes down the path, returns, goes up in the other direction, then returns; this is said by some to ward off any spirits which might be about. The **nkumu** is now brought out by the **lisewa** slaves.[1] His grave, a circular hole with a crypt in one side of it, its entrance facing west, had been previously prepared. Few people in the Bonginda villages knew or had seen the actual burying place of an **nkumu**. While the corpse was carried to the grave followed by a crowd, the executioner finished his work. Those who stayed behind took the bodies of the decapitated men and women and divided them among all the participants of the funeral who would subsequently devour everything.

Accompanying the funeral procession to the grave were the **nkil**, one or more men or women who were destined to accompany the **nkumu** to his grave and to the other world beyond. At the burial of an **nkumu** witnessed in 1930 at which the semblances of some of the old rites were carried out, a party of armed men contested the right of the procession to approach the grave, there was a mock battle for a few minutes between two bands of the funeral party, and then the procession gained right of way. At the grave-side the legs and sometimes the arms of one **nkil** were broken by heavy clubs to prevent him from escaping. Then seated on the ground the body of the **nkumu** would be placed on the knees of this one, whose arms would be placed round the **nkumu** and securely fastened by driving a peg right through both wrists. Sometimes two **nkil** were thus used. If the number of victims was sufficient, others would be buried alive too, being placed in the grave in the recumbent **nsonjo** position, with the corpse on top of them, its weight being sufficient, with the earth filling in the grave, to prevent escape. The **nkumu** was now ready for burial and was placed in the crypt, facing west.[2] The relatives of the **nkumu** approach, they pluck the leaves and stem of a juicy bush known as **mokoko** and chewing it, expectorate ceremonially on the body while they address it in language somewhat as follows: 'You are going to leave us now, we are mourning, for you were a good and wise man, your discernment in matters of justice was without parallel, &c. . . . we wish that you may be happy where you go, have many wives, beget many children, luck not for most. But don't take with you our power to beget children, leave us also some of this wisdom of yours, for what you were, we would be.' This prayer over, the **mantshi** would be slipped off the head of the corpse and replaced by the informal hat, all done so deterministically that the bare head was not seen. The entrance to the

[1] The body was supposed to have remained in state for seven to nine days, but usually it was buried privately some after death, a dummy being set up with the **mantshi** on its head, and the succeeding ceremonies being conducted with only the dummy in the place of the actual body. The inland villages however did allow the body to remain unburied for the long period, the wives being forced to keep watch in the same house. The Bonginda buried their **nkumu** generally in their houses or the spot where they had been accustomed to rest, burying the dummy at some other spot further off.

[2] All burials have particular regard to this east-west position, those buried in the recumbent position having the feet to the west. The native explanation is that this allows the spirit of the departed to follow the path of the setting sun.